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MINISTRY OF HEALTH
1925

**AXMINSTER
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.**

REPORT

OF

**Medical Officer of Health,
1925.**



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MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

AXMINSTER, —.

May 12th, 1926.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
AXMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg submit to you the Annual Report of the District for the year 1925.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (Acres)	...	...	...	2141
Population (Census 1921)	...	...	...	1925
Estimated Population (1925)	...	...	...	2122
Number of Inhabited Houses (1921)	...	...	...	489
Number of Families or separate occupiers (1921)	...	...	...	511
Rateable Value	...	...	£10143	17s. 11½d.
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	£42	5s. 3d.

Axminster is a small market town. There are two brush factories. Many of the women are engaged in lace mending.

The people live under comfortable circumstances.

Vital Statistics.

Births registered 33: Legitimate 18 Males, 13 Females.
Illegitimate 2 „

Birth Rate 15·5. The rate for England and Wales was 18·3.

Deaths registered 26—Males 10, Females 16. A Death Rate of 12·2. The rate for England and Wales was 12·2.

CAUSES OF DEATH:

Measles	...	...	1
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System			1
Premature Birth	...	...	1
Suicide	...	...	1
Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	3
Cancer	...	...	3
Heart Disease	...	...	4
Bronchitis	...	...	4
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	...	...	2
Other defined diseases	...	...	6

Deaths of Infants under one year of age—2. A Rate of 60·6 per 1000 births.

13 of the deaths were between 65 and 95 :

4	between 65 and 75
4	" 75 " 85
4	" 85 " 90
1	over 90.

No woman died in or in consequence of child-birth.

There were no deaths from Whooping Cough or Diarrhœa. One death from Measles.

Amount paid in Out-relief during 1925—£418 13s. 3d.

No causes of sickness or invalidity have been specially noteworthy during the year.

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

Axminster Cottage Hospital (10 beds) and the Union Infirmary, Axminster.

1. Tuberculosis.—Dispensary and Sanatorium—Ivybank, Exeter, and Hawkmoor Sanatorium, Bovey Tracey, provided by the Devon County Council.
2. Maternity cases are admitted to Axminster Cottage Hospital when beds are available, and at the Union Infirmary.
3. Fever.—Diphtheria, Enteric and Scarlet Fever patients are admitted to the County Council's Isolation Hospital at Whipton, Exeter.

4. Smallpox.—The County Council has arranged for any cases that may occur.

The only institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children is at the Poor Law Institution, Axminster.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.—For infectious cases the ambulance from Whipton Isolation Hospital; for non-infectious and accident cases a motor ambulance at Honiton, supported by subscriptions and charges for its use.

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.—None in the District.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority.

Medical Officer of Health—WM. LANGRAN, L.R.C.P., (part time).

Sanitary Inspector—W. H. BIGGS, whole time Rural and Urban Districts, qualifications :

- (1) Certificate Sanitary Inspectors' Examinations P.H.A. 1891, London.
- (2) Certificate as Sanitary Inspector Royal Sanitary Institute.
- (3) Certificate as Inspector of Meat and other Foods.
- (4) Royal Sanitary Institute Certificate in Sanitary Science as applied to Buildings and Public Works.

A Health Visitor, and School Nurse, appointed by the County Council, regularly visits the district.

Professional Nursing in the Home and Midwives.

GENERAL.—The Axminster Nursing Association provides a Nurse for the district, she is a Certified Midwife. The Sanitary Authority subscribe to the funds.

No provision for infectious diseases.

There are two Midwives practising in the Area.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

WATER :

The supply is a constant one and according to analyst's report of excellent quality but soft. The entire population is supplied by means of taps. There are not any standpipes. The source is from springs in a coppice known as Beavor Batch which is owned by the Local Authority.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

No pollution of river from the town.

DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE.

The town has a modern system of sewers to tanks and filter, effluent to river.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

No privies or pail closets. Water carriage system throughout the Area.

SCAVENGING.

Daily sweeping of streets, house refuse removed twice weekly by Local Authority. Nearly all the houses are provided with moveable receptacles, 21 new ones supplied during the year, 12 yet to be provided.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Tabular statement of the work of the Sanitary Department during the year—

Schools inspected	...	...	1
Drains repaired	...	...	2
Drains relaid	...	...	13
New W.C.'s provided	...	...	10
Ashbins provided	...	...	21
Yards cleaned	...	...	4
Slaughter houses, visits to	...	...	147
Butchers' Shops and Market Stalls inspected	...	...	36
Meat surrendered (diseased or unfit for food of man)	...	...	1182 lbs.
Flushing Cisterns provided	...	...	2
Complaints received	...	...	4
Visits to Bakehouses	...	...	3
Visits to Dairies	...	...	12
Visits to Workshops	...	...	5
Houses limewashed and cleansed	...	...	16
Intimation notices served to abate nuisances	...	...	28
Statutory notices served	...	...	2
Houses inspected	...	...	25
Houses repaired	...	...	6
Samples of water taken	...	...	3
Eaves gutter provided	...	...	2
Windows repaired	...	...	2
Roofs repaired	...	...	3

Premises and occupations controlled by Byelaws or Regulations
—Slaughter houses only.

SCHOOLS.—There are two in the Area. Water supply and sanitary conditions satisfactory. Children from infected houses and contacts are excluded, also Diphtheria cases until the swab is two or three times negative.

HOUSING.

There is a shortage of houses. The Local Authority have a waiting list of 78 persons requiring houses. During the year three non-parlour houses have been erected and let, six more are in course of erection, also nine parlour type. The Council are endeavouring to purchase a site on which to embark on a larger scheme, if possible to erect fifty houses.

There has been no important change in the population nor is any anticipated in the near future.

OVERCROWDING.—To some extent owing to the shortage of housing accommodation.

FITNESS OF HOUSES.—General Standard.—In the older parts of the town this is bad: old, crowded on space, and several would be closed were other houses available.

Housing Statistics for the year 1925.

Number of new houses erected during the year:—

(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b))	6
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :	
(i) By the Local Authority	...
(ii) By other bodies or persons	...
	3
	3

1. *Unfit dwelling-houses.*

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	..	51
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	..	25

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ..	Nil
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	30

2. *Remedy of defects without Service of formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal notice by the Local Authority or their Officers ..	28
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3. *Action under Statutory Powers.*

A.—Proceedings under section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—	
(a) by owners	Nil
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners ..	Nil
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	Nil

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ..	2
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—	
(a) by owners	2
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners ..	Nil

C.—Proceedings under sections 11, 14 and 15 Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	Nil
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit	Nil
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	Nil
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	Nil

MILK SUPPLY.—The milk supply is good and plentiful and produced in the District. Devon County Council issue the licences.

MEAT.—The Sanitary Inspector frequently visits the slaughter houses. No public slaughter house.

Private slaughter houses in the area :—

	In 1920.	In January, 1925.	In December, 1925.
Registered	—	—	—
Licensed	3	3	3

Prevalence of and control over Infectious Diseases.

The Area has been particularly free of notifiable infectious disease during the period since 1920. Only thirty-five cases were notified of which thirteen were Pneumonia, two of Malaria in 1920.

Anti-toxin is supplied free to poor class patients.

No return cases of Scarlet Fever.

The County Council undertakes the examination of pathological and bacteriological specimens.

The Sanitary Inspector disinfects the premises after all cases of notifiable disease.

No use has been made of the Schick or Dick tests.

No primary vaccinations or re-vaccinations have been performed by the M.O.H. under the Public Health (Small-pox Prevention) Regulations 1917.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1925.

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	1	Nil	Nil
Septic Broncho Pneumonia	1	1	1 aged 73

Tuberculosis.*New Cases and Mortality during 1925.*

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
25 ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
35 ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
45 ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
55 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 & upwards	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Totals ...	3	...	...	2	1	...	...	2

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

WM. LANGRAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

